

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-16 and 21-24 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4, 7, 12 and 16, the Specification and Abstract are amended. No new matter has been added.

Support for the amendments to claims 1, 7 and 12 is found through the Specification, the drawing figures and claims. Claims 4 and 16 are amended to correct minor informalities. The Specification and the Abstract are amended to comply with formal requirements.

The Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication in the Office Action that claims 7-16 recite allowable subject matter and that claims 21-24 are allowed.

For the following reasons, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. FORMAL MATTERS

On page 2, item 1 of the Office Action, the Abstract is objected to for being informal. The Abstract is amended to obviate the objection.

On page 2, item 2 of the Office Action, the disclosure is objected to for lacking the priority claim. The specification is amended to include the priority claim.

Further, claims 4 and 16 are objected to for containing informalities. Claims 4 and 16 are amended to obviate the objection.

II. REPLY TO REJECTIONS

On page 2, item 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 2,742,105 to Dow (hereinafter "Dow"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dow discloses a vacuum cleaner which does not allow the cover to close unless a filter bag is in place (col. 1, lines 31-34). Dow's vacuum cleaner includes a vacuum cleaner body 10 with a cover 11. To prevent closing of the cover 11 when a filter bag B is missing from the body 10, Dow discloses a lever 18 being urged by a wire spring 23 to be disposed in a vertical position between a rim member 17 and a depending annular wall 14 of the cover 11 as shown in Figure 3. When a filter bag B is positioned inside the body 10, a cardboard top a of the filter bag B pushes the lever 18 away from the rim member 17 and the depending annular wall 14 so that the lever 18 no longer prevents the cover 11 from closing (Figure 4, col. 2, lines 34-64).

An alternative embodiment of Dow discloses an arm 27 having a finger 28 to prevent closing of the cover 11. However, when the bag is positioned inside the body 10, the bag top urges the arm 27 and the finger 29 away from the rim 17 allowing closure of the cover 11 against the body 10.

In both embodiments of Dow, as shown in Figures 3, 4, 6 and 7, the filter bag is received and secured by sealing rings 15, 16 respectively held by the cover 11 and a rim member 17 on the body 10. The lever 18 and the arm 27 (corresponding to the claimed interlock mechanism) are not coupled to a filter mounting portion, nor do these elements of Dow interact with any

filter mounting portion, as recited in claim 1. Consequently, claim 1 is patentable over the applied reference. Claims 2-6, which depend from claim 1 are likewise patentable over the applied reference for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, Seth S. Kim, at the telephone number listed below.

Serial No. 10/644,016
Reply to Office Action of January 13, 2005

Docket No. IK-0029A

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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